

R E M A R K S

Claims 1, 4 to 16, 18 to 24 and 27 to 30 as set forth in Appendix II of this paper are now pending in this case. Claims 2 and 3 have been canceled and Claims 1, 4 to 16, 18 to 24 and 27 to 30 have been amended as indicated in the Listing of Claims set forth in Appendix I of this paper¹⁾.

Accordingly, in addition to editorial changes in the wording of Claims 4, 5, 20, 21, 23 and 24, applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the requirements of Claim 3. Claims 4 to 16, 18 to 24 and 27 to 30 depend either directly or indirectly upon Claim 1 and incorporate the requisite requirements by reference. Further, applicants have revised the expression "soft capsule" in Claims 1, 4 to 16, 18 to 24 and 27 to 30 to read --soft capsule shell--²⁾. No new matter has been added.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1 to 16, 18 to 24 and 27 to 30 under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2, as being indefinite. More particularly the Examiner contends that it is unclear from the claims whether the polymers specified in the claims are part of the capsule shell or part of a filling.

It is respectfully submitted that the test of definiteness under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶2, is whether a person of ordinary skill in the art would understand the meets and bounds of the claim when reading the claim in the light of the specification supporting it³⁾. Already in the introductory remarks⁴⁾ applicants specification makes it clear that the expression "soft capsules" is used in the context of the invention as a synonym for the shells⁵⁾. A person of ordinary skill reading the claims in light of the supporting specification would

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- 1) On form PTOL-326, the Examiner indicated Claims 17, 25 and 26 as being withdrawn from consideration. Claims 17, 25 and 26 were, however, canceled in applicants' amendment dated August 07, 2002 (date of the Certificate of Mailing).
 - 2) The revised wording is supported by applicants' disclosure, particular page 26, indicated lines 32 to 36, of the application.
 - 3) Morton Int. Inc. v. Cardinal Chem. Co., 5 F.3d 1464, 28 USPQ2d 1190 (CAFC 1993); Orthokinetics Inc. v. Safety Travel Chairs, Inc., 806 F.2d 1565, 1 USPQ2d 1081 (CAFC 1986)
 - 4) Note pages 1 to 5 of the application, more particularly page 1, indicated lines 14 to 16, in conjunction with page 5, indicated lines 1 to 4, of the application.
 - 5) Note ftn. (4) and ftn. (2).

therefore not be in doubt whether the polymer specified in applicants' claims is to be part of the shell or part of the filling. As such, the examiner's position does not appear to be well taken.

In light of the foregoing remarks and the revisions effected in the claim language it is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection under Section 112, ¶2, be withdrawn. Favorable action is solicited.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 2, 6 to 16, 18 to 24 and 27 to 30 under 35 U.S.C. §112, ¶1, contending that the scope of enablement which is provided by the specification concerning polyether-containing compounds does not extend beyond the scope of formula I as defined in Claim 3.

Applicants have introduced formula I and the definition thereof set forth in Claim 3 into Claims 1. Claims 4 to 16, 18 to 24 and 27 to 30 depend either directly or indirectly upon Claim 1, so that those dependent claims incorporate the respective formula and definition by reference. Favorable reconsideration of the Examiner's position and withdrawal of the rejection under Section 112, ¶1, is therefore respectfully solicited.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1 to 9 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable in light of Claims 1 to 19 of *Götsche et al.* (US 6,579,953).

Applicants herewith submit a terminal disclaimer disclaiming the terminal part of a patent granted on this application which would extend beyond the expiration date of US 6,579,953, and agreeing that a patent granted on this application shall be enforceable only for and during such period that the legal title of such patent is the same as the legal title to US 6,579,953. Withdrawal of the rejection under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting is therefore respectfully solicited.


The Examiner has further rejected Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable in light of the teaching of *Harr us t al.* (US 3,984,494) when taken in view of the *Hard Capsul s* ... publication submitted by applicants with the amendment dated March 18, 2003 (date of the Certificate of Mailing). In light of the foregoing changes in the

claims, Claim 1 now defines the subject matter of previous Claim 3 which was not included by the Examiner in the rejection under Section 103(a). Withdrawal of the respective rejection is therefore respectfully solicited.

In light of the foregoing and the attached, the application should now be in condition for allowance. Early action is appreciated.

Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including Extension of Time fees, to Deposit Account No. 11.0345. Please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
KEIL & WEINKAUF


Herbert B. Keil
Reg. No. 18,967

1350 Connecticut Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 659-0100

Encl.: THE LISTING OF CLAIMS (Appendix I)
THE CURRENT CLAIMS (Appendix II)
Therminial Disclaimer concerning **US 6,579,953**

HBK/BAS

A P P E N D I X I:

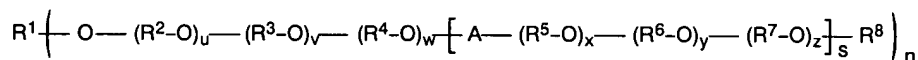
THE LISTING OF CLAIMS (version with markings):

1. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell comprising
- (a) from 10 to 100% of polymers prepared by polymerization of vinyl esters in the presence of polyethers
 - (b) from 0 to 80% of structure-improving auxiliaries and
 - (c) from 0 to 30% of other constituents selected from the group consisting of fillers, release agents, flow aids, stabilizers, water-soluble or water-insoluble dyes, flavorings and sweeteners,

and wherein the polymers (a) are obtained by free-radical polymerization of

a) at least one vinyl ester of C₁-C₂₄-carboxylic acids in the presence of

b) polyether-containing compounds of the general formula I



in which the variables have, independently of one another, the following meaning:

R¹ hydrogen, C₁-C₂₄-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-, polyalcohol residue;

R⁵ hydrogen, C₁-C₂₄-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

R² to R⁴ -(CH₂)₂-, -(CH₂)₃-, -(CH₂)₄-, -CH₂-CH(R⁶)-, -CH₂-CHOR⁷-CH₂-;

R⁶ C₁-C₂₄-alkyl;

R⁷ hydrogen, C₁-C₂₄-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

A -C(=O)-O-, -C(=O)-B-C(=O)-O-, -C(=O)-NH-B-NH-C(=O)-O;

B -(CH₂)_t-, arylene, optionally substituted;

n 1 to 1000;

s 0 to 1000;

t 1 to 12;

u 1 to 5000;

v 0 to 5000;

w 0 to 5000;

x 0 to 5000;

y 0 to 5000;

z 0 to 5000;

and

c) from 0 to 50% of one or more other copolymerizable monomers and subsequent at least partial hydrolysis of the ester functions in the original monomers a).

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the [~~polymers (a) are obtained by free radical polymerization of~~]

~~[a] at least one vinyl ester of C₁-C₂₄ carboxylic acids in the presence of]~~

~~[b)]~~ polyether-containing compounds of [~~the general~~] formula I [~~with~~] have a number average molecular weight of from 300 to 100000, [~~in which~~] and the variables have, independently of one another, the following meaning:

R¹ hydrogen, C₁-C₁₂-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-, polyalcohol residue;

R⁵ hydrogen, C₁-C₁₂-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

R² to R⁴ -(CH₂)₂-, -(CH₂)₃-, -(CH₂)₄-, -CH₂-CH(R⁶)-, -CH₂-CHOR⁷-CH₂-;

R⁶ C₁-C₁₂-alkyl;

R⁷ hydrogen, C₁-C₁₂-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

n 1 to 8;

s 0;

u 2 to 2000;

v 0 to 2000;

w 0 to 2000[+].

[and]

~~[c) one or more other copolymerizable monomers]~~

~~[and subsequent at least partial hydrolysis of the ester functions in the original monomers a).]~~

5. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the [~~polymers (a) are obtained by free radical polymerization of~~]

~~[a) at least one vinyl ester of C₁-C₂₄-carboxylic acids in the presence of]~~

[b)] polyether-containing compounds of ~~[the general]~~ formula I ~~[with]~~ have a number average molecular weight of from 500 to 50000, ~~[in which]~~ and the variables have, independently of one another, the following meaning:

R¹ hydrogen, C₁-C₆-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

R⁵ hydrogen, C₁-C₆-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

R² to R⁴ -(CH₂)₂-, -(CH₂)₃-, -(CH₂)₄-, -CH₂-CH(R⁶)-, -CH₂-CHOR⁷-CH₂-;

R⁶ C₁-C₆-alkyl;

R⁷ hydrogen, C₁-C₆-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

n 1;

s 0;

u 5 to 1000;

v 0 to 1000;

w 0 to 1000[+].

[and]

~~[c) one or more other copolymerizable monomers]~~

~~[and subsequent at least partial hydrolysis of the ester functions in the original monomers a).]~~

6. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the polymers (a) are obtained by free-radical polymerization of

a) at least one vinyl ester of C₁-C₂₄-carboxylic acids in the presence of

b) polyether-containing compounds and

c) one or more other copolymerizable monomers

and subsequent at least partial hydrolysis of the ester functions in the original monomers a), wherein the polyether-containing compounds b) have been prepared by polymerization of ethylenically unsaturated alkylene oxide-containing monomers, alone or together with other copolymerizable monomers.

7. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 6, wherein the polyether-containing compounds b) have been prepared by polymerization of polyalkylene oxide vinyl ethers, alone or together with other copolymerizable monomers.

8. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 6, wherein the polyether-containing compounds b) have been prepared by polymerization of polyalkylene oxide (meth)acrylates, alone or together with other copolymerizable monomers.
9. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim [2] 1, wherein said other copolymerizable monomers c) are selected from the group consisting of:
acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, maleic acid, fumaric acid, crotonic acid, maleic anhydride and its monoesters, methyl acrylate, methyl methacrylate, ethyl acrylate, ethyl methacrylate, n-butyl acrylate, n-butyl methacrylate, t-butyl acrylate, t-butyl methacrylate, isobutyl acrylate, isobutyl methacrylate, 2-ethylhexyl acrylate, stearyl acrylate, stearyl methacrylate, N-t-butylacrylamide, N-octylacrylamide, 2-hydroxyethyl acrylate, hydroxypropyl acrylates, 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate, hydroxypropyl methacrylates, alkylene glycol (meth)acrylates, styrene, unsaturated sulfonic acids.
10. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim [2] 1, wherein the amounts of a), b) and c) are
a) 10 to 98% by weight
b) 2 to 90% by weight
c) 0 to 50% by weight.
11. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim [2] 1, wherein the amounts of a), b) and c) are
a) 50 to 97% by weight
b) 3 to 50% by weight
c) 0 to 20% by weight.
12. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim [2] 1, wherein the amounts of a), b) and c) are
a) 65 to 97% by weight
b) 3 to 35% by weight
c) 0 to 20% by weight.
13. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the resulting polymers are subsequently crosslinked.
14. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 13, wherein the resulting polymers are subsequently crosslinked by

reaction with one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of dialdehydes, diketones, dicarboxylic acids, boric acid, boric acid salts, and salts of multiply charged cations.

15. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the structure-improving auxiliaries (b) employed are compounds from the following classes:
 - a) polymers with a molecular weight of more than 50000,
 - b) substances leading to crosslinking of the polymer chains of the polymers,
 - c) and, optionally, substances which lead to crosslinking of the polymer chains of the structure-improving auxiliaries.
16. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the structure-improving auxiliaries employed are polymers selected from the group consisting of the following classes of substances: polyamino acids, polysaccharides and synthetic polymers.
17. (canceled)
18. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, which consists of from 10 to 100% by weight of polymers of vinyl esters on polyether, from 0 to 80% of structure-improving auxiliaries and from 0 to 30% of said other constituents.
19. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, obtained by a process selected from the groups consisting of the rotary die process, Accogel process, Norton process, drop or blow process or the Colton-Upjohn process.
20. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, which [~~comprises~~] encapsulates one or more active pharmaceutical ingredients, vitamins, carotenoids, minerals, trace elements, food supplements, cosmetic active ingredients, crop protection agents, bath additives, perfume, flavoring, cleaners or detergents.
21. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the [~~capsule~~] shell comprises from 20 to 80% of a polymer resistant to gastric fluid.
22. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein resistance to gastric fluid is achieved by applying after

production a coating resistant to gastric fluid by pharmaceutical coating processes.

23. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 20 which [~~comprises~~] encapsulates one or more pharmaceutical ingredients.
24. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 20 which [~~comprises~~] encapsulates one or more cosmetic active ingredients, crop protection agents, for cleaners or food supplements.
25. (canceled)
26. (canceled)
27. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 16, wherein said polyamino acids are selected from the group consisting of gelatin, zein, soybean protein and derivatives thereof.
28. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 16, wherein said polysaccharides are selected from the group consisting of starch, degraded starch, maltodextrins, carboxymethylstarch, cellulose, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, hydroxypropylcellulose, hydroxyethylcellulose, methylcellulose, carboxymethylcellulose, ethylcellulose, cellulose acetate, cellulose acetate phthalate, hydroxypropylcellulose acetate phthalate, hydroxypropylcellulose acetate succinate, hemicellulose, galactomannans, pectins, alginates, carrageenans, xanthan, gellan, dextran, curdlan, pullulan, gum arabic, chitin, and derivatives thereof.
29. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 16, wherein said synthetic polymers are selected from the group consisting of polyacrylic acid, polymethacrylic acid, copolymers of acrylic esters and methacrylic esters, polyvinyl alcohols, polyvinyl acetate, polyethylene glycols, polyoxyethylene/polyoxypropylene block copolymers, polyvinylpyrrolidones and derivatives thereof.
30. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amounts of (a), (b) and (c) are:
 - (a) 20 to 98% by weight;
 - (b) 1 to 50% by weight; and
 - (c) 0.1 to 30% by weight.

A P P E N D I X II:

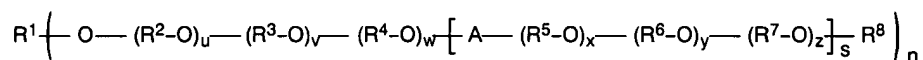
THE CURRENT CLAIMS (clean version):

1. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell comprising

- (a) from 10 to 100% of polymers prepared by polymerization of vinyl esters in the presence of polyethers
- (b) from 0 to 80% of structure-improving auxiliaries and
- (c) from 0 to 30% of other constituents selected from the group consisting of fillers, release agents, flow aids, stabilizers, water-soluble or water-insoluble dyes, flavorings and sweeteners,

and wherein the polymers (a) are obtained by free-radical polymerization of

- a) at least one vinyl ester of C₁-C₂₄-carboxylic acids in the presence of
- b) polyether-containing compounds of the general formula I



in which the variables have, independently of one another, the following meaning:

R¹ hydrogen, C₁-C₂₄-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-, polyalcohol residue;

R⁵ hydrogen, C₁-C₂₄-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

R² to R⁴ -(CH₂)₂-, -(CH₂)₃-, -(CH₂)₄-, -CH₂-CH(R⁶)-, -CH₂-CHOR⁷-CH₂-;

R⁶ C₁-C₂₄-alkyl;

R⁷ hydrogen, C₁-C₂₄-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

A -C(=O)-O-, -C(=O)-B-C(=O)-O-, -C(=O)-NH-B-NH-C(=O)-O-;

B -(CH₂)_t-, arylene, optionally substituted;

n 1 to 1000;

s 0 to 1000;

t 1 to 12;

u 1 to 5000;

v 0 to 5000;

w 0 to 5000;

x 0 to 5000;

y 0 to 5000;

z 0 to 5000;

and

c) from 0 to 50% of one or more other copolymerizable monomers and subsequent at least partial hydrolysis of the ester functions in the original monomers a).

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the polyether-containing compounds of formula I have a number average molecular weight of from 300 to 100000, and the variables have, independently of one another, the following meaning:

R¹ hydrogen, C₁-C₁₂-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-, polyalcohol residue;

R⁵ hydrogen, C₁-C₁₂-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

R² to R⁴ -(CH₂)₂-, -(CH₂)₃-, -(CH₂)₄-, -CH₂-CH(R⁶)-, -CH₂-CHOR⁷-CH₂-;

R⁶ C₁-C₁₂-alkyl;

R⁷ hydrogen, C₁-C₁₂-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

n 1 to 8;

s 0;

u 2 to 2000;

v 0 to 2000;

w 0 to 2000.

5. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the polyether-containing compounds of formula I have a number average molecular weight of from 500 to 50000, and the variables have, independently of one another, the following meaning:

R¹ hydrogen, C₁-C₆-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

R⁵ hydrogen, C₁-C₆-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

R² to R⁴ -(CH₂)₂-, -(CH₂)₃-, -(CH₂)₄-, -CH₂-CH(R⁶)-, -CH₂-CHOR⁷-CH₂-;

R⁶ C₁-C₆-alkyl;

R⁷ hydrogen, C₁-C₆-alkyl, R⁶-C(=O)-, R⁶-NH-C(=O)-;

n 1;

s 0;
u 5 to 1000;
v 0 to 1000;
w 0 to 1000.

6. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the polymers (a) are obtained by free-radical polymerization of
- a) at least one vinyl ester of C₁-C₂₄-carboxylic acids in the presence of
 - b) polyether-containing compounds and
 - c) one or more other copolymerizable monomers
- and subsequent at least partial hydrolysis of the ester functions in the original monomers a), wherein the polyether-containing compounds b) have been prepared by polymerization of ethylenically unsaturated alkylene oxide-containing monomers, alone or together with other copolymerizable monomers.
7. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 6, wherein the polyether-containing compounds b) have been prepared by polymerization of polyalkylene oxide vinyl ethers, alone or together with other copolymerizable monomers.
8. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 6, wherein the polyether-containing compounds b) have been prepared by polymerization of polyalkylene oxide (meth)acrylates, alone or together with other copolymerizable monomers.
9. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein said other copolymerizable monomers c) are selected from the group consisting of:
- acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, maleic acid, fumaric acid, crotonic acid, maleic anhydride and its monoesters, methyl acrylate, methyl methacrylate, ethyl acrylate, ethyl methacrylate, n-butyl acrylate, n-butyl methacrylate, t-butyl acrylate, t-butyl methacrylate, isobutyl acrylate, isobutyl methacrylate, 2-ethylhexyl acrylate, stearyl acrylate, stearyl methacrylate, N-t-butylacrylamide, N-octylacrylamide, 2-hydroxyethyl acrylate, hydroxypropyl acrylates, 2-hydroxyethyl methacrylate, hydroxypropyl methacrylates, alkylene glycol (meth)acrylates, styrene, unsaturated sulfonic acids.

10. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amounts of a), b) and c) are
 - a) 10 to 98% by weight
 - b) 2 to 90% by weight
 - c) 0 to 50% by weight.
11. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amounts of a), b) and c) are
 - a) 50 to 97% by weight
 - b) 3 to 50% by weight
 - c) 0 to 20% by weight.
12. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amounts of a), b) and c) are
 - a) 65 to 97% by weight
 - b) 3 to 35% by weight
 - c) 0 to 20% by weight.
13. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the resulting polymers are subsequently crosslinked.
14. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 13, wherein the resulting polymers are subsequently crosslinked by reaction with one or more compounds selected from the group consisting of dialdehydes, diketones, dicarboxylic acids, boric acid, boric acid salts, and salts of multiply charged cations.
15. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the structure-improving auxiliaries (b) employed are compounds from the following classes:
 - a) polymers with a molecular weight of more than 50000,
 - b) substances leading to crosslinking of the polymer chains of the polymers,
 - c) and, optionally, substances which lead to crosslinking of the polymer chains of the structure-improving auxiliaries.
16. (*currently amended*) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the structure-improving auxiliaries employed are polymers selected from the group consisting of the following classes of substances: polyamino acids, polysaccharides and synthetic polymers.

17. (canceled)
18. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, which consists of from 10 to 100% by weight of polymers of vinyl esters on polyether, from 0 to 80% of structure-improving auxiliaries and from 0 to 30% of said other constituents.
19. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, obtained by a process selected from the groups consisting of the rotary die process, Accogel process, Norton process, drop or blow process or the Colton-Upjohn process.
20. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, which encapsulates one or more active pharmaceutical ingredients, vitamins, carotenoids, minerals, trace elements, food supplements, cosmetic active ingredients, crop protection agents, bath additives, perfume, flavoring, cleaners or detergents.
21. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the shell comprises from 20 to 80% of a polymer resistant to gastric fluid.
22. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein resistance to gastric fluid is achieved by applying after production a coating resistant to gastric fluid by pharmaceutical coating processes.
23. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 20 which encapsulates one or more pharmaceutical ingredients.
24. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 20 which encapsulates one or more cosmetic active ingredients, crop protection agents, for cleaners or food supplements.
25. (canceled)
26. (canceled)
27. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 16, wherein said polyamino acids are selected from the group consisting of gelatin, zein, soybean protein and derivatives thereof.
28. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 16, wherein said polysaccharides are selected from the group consisting of starch, degraded starch, maltodextrins, carboxymethylstarch, cellulose, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, hydroxypropylcel-

lulose, hydroxyethylcellulose, methylcellulose, carboxymethylcellulose, ethylcellulose, cellulose acetate, cellulose acetate phthalate, hydroxypropylcellulose acetate phthalate, hydroxypropylcellulose acetate succinate, hemicellulose, galactomannans, pectins, alginates, carrageenans, xanthan, gellan, dextran, curdlan, pullulan, gum arabic, chitin, and derivatives thereof.

29. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 16, wherein said synthetic polymers are selected from the group consisting of polyacrylic acid, polymethacrylic acid, copolymers of acrylic esters and methacrylic esters, polyvinyl alcohols, polyvinyl acetate, polyethylene glycols, polyoxyethylene/polyoxypropylene block copolymers, polyvinylpyrrolidones and derivatives thereof.
30. (currently amended) A soft capsule shell as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amounts of (a), (b) and (c) are:
- (a) 20 to 98% by weight;
 - (b) 1 to 50% by weight; and
 - (c) 0.1 to 30% by weight.